

Transportation News

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CONTACTS:

Brian Williamsen

217-558-0517

IDOT Secretary honors 3 employees, for their role in saving a man's life during recent flooding in southern Illinois

Secretary's Award given to District 9 employees who pulled a man out of a drainage ditch, as floodwaters threatened his life

ANNA – Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Secretary Milton R. Sees today honored three IDOT District 9 employees, who helped save a man's life this March, during the flooding in southern Illinois. Gary Sweitzer, Greg Inman and John Lloyd all received honorary plaques and pins during a ceremony this morning, at the Anna Maintenance Yard.

"These three gentlemen went above and beyond their duties, and another man is here with us today, because of their selfless efforts," said Secretary Sees. "It is with great pleasure that I present these awards, today."

At approximately 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 19th, Inman and Lloyd (both seasonal IDOT Highway Maintainers) were driving to a pothole patching detail, along Illinois 146 in Union County. On their way, they came across a woman who was waving her arms and looking into a drainage ditch. Inman and Lloyd stopped their vehicle and discovered that a man was in the water, clinging to the headwall of a box culvert bridge.

Greg told the woman to call 911, as he and John attempted to pull the man out. However, the waders he was wearing, plus the strong current, prevented him from being pulled out.

After hearing scanner traffic, the lead worker at the Anna Yard called Sweitzer on the radio to help. Sweitzer, an IDOT Highway Maintainer, arrived at the location and cut the straps on the man's waders while Inman and Lloyd held onto him, preventing him from being sucked through the culvert.

The current pulled the waders off the man, after this, and with a few tugs, the IDOT employees were able to get him out of the water. It took approximately two minutes for the waders to come out the other end of the culvert, showing just how dire this situation was for a very grateful Ronald Campbell.

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“The IDOT truck pulled up and the workers started helping me, right away. They stopped what they were doing and made it their main priority to get me out of the water and save my life,” said Campbell.” “The IDOT workers held onto me, got their feet in the water with no concern for themselves, and honestly if they hadn’t stopped to help, I probably wouldn’t be making these comments, today. I am very thankful.”

Campbell had apparently been trying to salvage some personal property and other debris from the culvert, in an attempt to help clear it, but ended up in the water. He was in the water for nearly half an hour. The efforts of these employees went a long way, toward saving Campbell’s life, and showed a true dedication to the people these IDOT employees work every day, to serve.